

## Message Text

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S/S -O: MR. HOGANSON

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P R 270004Z FEB 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KABUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 044032

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS1

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US

SUBJECT: INDO-U.S. RELATIONS -- CALL OF INDIAN EMBASSY

DCM GONSALVES ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

BANGKOK PASS AMBASSADOR SAXBE

1. SUMMARY: INDIAN EMBASSY DCM GONSALVES CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FEBRUARY 25 TO PROTEST LIFTING OF ARMS EMBARGO. GONSALVES AND ATHERTON REVIEWED POSITIONS OF RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS ON ARMS QUESTION. DISCUSSION CLOSED ON HOPEFUL NOTE THAT DESPITE CURRENT DIFFICULTIES, EFFORTS TO IMPROVE INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS WOULD CONTINUE. SESSION WAS FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS CANDID RECOGNITION OF OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ESPECIALLY ON IMPACT U.S. DECISION ON SIMLA PROCESS.

END SUMMARY.

2. INDIAN EMBASSY DCM GONSALVES AND POLITICAL OFFICER DHUME CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FEBRUARY 25 FOR DISCUSSION OF INDO-U.S. RELATIONS IN LIGHT OF LIFTING OF OUR SOUTH ASIA ARMS EMBARGO. KUX AND NACH OF NEA/INS ALSO WERE PRESENT.

3. GONSALVES OPENED BY STATING GOI WAS LODGING FORMAL PROTEST ON LIFTING OF ARMS EMBARGO AS INDIA FEARED U.S. ACTION WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT PROGRESS OF NORMALIZATION IN SUBCONTINENT. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT U.S. ACTION SIGNALLED A BASIC CHANGE IN AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE SUBCONTINENT, A TURNING AWAY FROM THE COURSE OUTLINED IN OCTOBER INDO-U.S. JOINT COMMUNIQUE. ALTHOUGH GONSALVES SAID INDIA HAD "NO PROBLEM" WITH PAK-U.S. FRIENDSHIP, HE EXPRESSED FEARS THAT U.S. ACTION IMPLIED NEW POLICY WITH ENHANCED SECURITY COMMITMENT TO PAKISTAN THAT MIGHT BE DIRECTED AGAINST INDIA.

4. ASSERTING THAT INDIA HAD NOT INCREASED ITS ARMED STRENGTH OR ACQUIRED NEW WEAPONS SYSTEMS SINCE 1971, GONSALVES SAID THAT LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO HAD MADE A SOUTH ASIAN ARMS RACE "ALMOST INEVITABLE NOW". WITH REGARD TO ANY FUTURE U.S. ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN, HE SAID THESE WOULD NOT, AS WE HAD STATED, BE COMPARABLE TO THOSE BY FRANCE OR BRITAIN SINCE THE PRIMARY U.S. MOTIVATION WOULD BE POLITICAL, NOT COMMERCIAL.

5. ATHERTON REPLIED BY CAREFULLY GOING OVER USG STATEMENTS ON LIFTING OF EMBARGO. HE STRONGLY EMPHASIZED THAT WE STAND BY EVERYTHING IN THE OCTOBER JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND THAT U.S. POLICY WAS UNCHANGED: WE WANT THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS TO CONTINUE, WE ATTACH OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE TO THE NON-INTERFERENCE PRINCIPLE, AND WE WANT NOTHING TO AFFECT ADVERSELY THE STABILITY OF THE REGION. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE U.S. RECOGNIZES THAT INDIA IS THE STRONGER PARTY AND THAT WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF FUELING AN ARMS RACE OR TRYING TO CREATE A PARITY OR EQUALITY OF STRENGTH SITUATION. THE U.S. CONFIDENTIAL

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HAS ALSO TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THAT INDIA HAS OTHER STRATEGIC CONCERNS APART FROM PAKISTAN.

6. ATHERTON FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT WE HAD BEEN CONCERNED THAT THE EMBARGO WAS ACTUALLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO INDO-PAK NORMALIZATION AND THAT WE FEEL LIFTING IT WILL STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF PAKISTANI ELEMENTS FAVORING BETTER RELATIONS WITH INDIA. AS FOR THE 1959 PAK-U.S.

MUTUAL SECURITY AGREEMENT, ATHERTON STRESSED IT WAS IN NO WAY DIRECTED AT INDIA AS A READING OF ACTUAL LANGUAGE WOULD MAKE CLEAR. GONSALVES REPLIED THAT INDIA, ALTHOUGH UNHAPPY WITH THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO, IS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE SIMLA PROCESS AND WILL PUSH AHEAD, "EVEN IF IT IS NOW MORE DIFFICULT".

7. ON THE NUCLEAR ISSUE, GONSALVES SAID HE THOUGHT THE SECRETARY WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REASSURE THE PAKS ON

INDIA'S PEACEFUL INTENTIONS BASED ON HIS OCTOBER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOI IN NEW DELHI. ATHERTON REPLIED THAT WE HAD WELCOMED GOI RESASSURANCES ON ITS PEACEFUL NUCLEAR INTENTIONS AND HAD CONVEYED THEM TO THE PAKISTANIS. HE ADDED THAT THE U.S. FEELS THAT IF PAKS FOREGO DEVELOPING NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE CAPABILITY AND FEEL ABLE TO ASSURE THEIR SECURITY BY CONVENTIONAL MEANS THIS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A POSITIVE FACTOR.

8. COMMENTING ON AMBASSADOR KAUL'S FEBRUARY 24 STATEMENT ON LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO, GONSALVES SAID IT HAD BEEN CLEARED IN NEW DELHI. HE AGREED THERE WAS DIFFERENCE IN TONE BETWEEN IT AND CHAVAN'S STATEMENT.

9. GONSALVES SAID INDIAN REACTION TO THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO WOULD BE STRONGER THAN IT MIGHT NORMALLY BE BECAUSE ELECTIONS ARE ONLY A YEAR AWAY. HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT IN A RECENT NY TIMES INTERVIEW, MRS. GANDHI HAD COMMENTED THAT INDIA AND THE U.S. SHOULD BUILD ON AREAS OF COOPERATION. ATHERTON REPLIED THAT WE HAD NOTED THE STATEMENT AND CONSIDERED IT A CONSTRUCTIVE VIEW. WE HOPED WE COULD CONTINUE TO BUILD ON AREAS OF INTEREST BETWEEN US WHILE FRANKLY RECOGNIZING

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OUR DIFFERENCES. GONSALVES AGREED, SAYING THAT INDIA HAS NO INTENTION OF FORGETTING THE WORK OF IMPROVING INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND GREATLY APPRECIATED THE ROLE THE SECRETARY HAS PLAYED IN THE PROCESS. KISSINGER

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